

The Athenian Mercury.

Tuesday, June 11. 1695.

Quest. 1. **P**ray give me leave to propose a Case to you.

Some few years ago dyed a certain Gentleman, who left behind him 3 Sons, and an estate of 200 l. per

Annum.

The Estate he gave to his Eldest Son, provided he married a wife, worth 800 l. in a years time; if not 'twas to descend to the 2d Son, with the same proviso; if both fail'd, then 'twas to come to the 3d Son; if he failed, then 'twas to revert to the Eldest, and all of them to try their fortunes over again. The Eldest Son takes no care of marrying till his year was almost expired, then he comes to a composition with his 2d Brother to give him 200 l. for half a year of his time; 'twas agreed; but by great misfortune the Eldest Brother was balk'd of a mistress within a fortnight before his half year was expired. So that now he was in danger of losing not only the Estate but 200 l. to boot, in this straight he presently makes his application to a Gentlewoman, whose fortune was commonly reputed to be 900 Guineas, a good woman she was, but none of the fairest, nor the straightest. He got her consent, and was married the very last day of the half year. This wife dies within a month; the husband demands her fortune, and can recover but 750 l. upon this all 3 Brothers are going to Law for the Estate.

The youngest Brothers plea is, that 'tis now above two years since his fathers Death; that his Eldest Brother not marrying within a year, forfeited all his Titles to the Estate, that the second Brother being not yet married the estate must descend to the 3d, and that the 2d Brother had no power to make any composition to the prejudice of the youngest.

The 2d Brothers plea against the Eldest is, that whatsoever his wifes portion went for, yet since no more is paid than 750 l. 'twill not entitle him to the Estate, that if he could recover the whole 900 Guineas, yet considering the 200 l. that he paid for composition, 'twould still fall short of the fortune that his father required. And in answer to the younger Brother, he thinks the composition that he made with the Elder, was no prejudice to the Younger, since he took as much time from him, as he gave to his Elder Brother: So that the Younger was never the farther from the Estate, and he thinks he may dispose of his own time as he pleases; and as to his not being married yet, that signifies nothing, because the suit was commenced before his time was expired.

The Eldest Brothers plea is, that his wifes fortune was really 900 Guineas; had she lived, she would have told him where and how to recover it; that 'tis misfortune enough for him, that he has lost a good wife, and above 200 l. of her fortune; 'twould be very hard to go to deprive him of his Estate too. That the Composition money does not detract from his wifes fortune, especially being paid to his Brother; that the Intention of his father is satisfied in bringing so much money into the family, for the father was indifferent who had it. Now the Question that I would be resolved in, which of these 3 Brothers ought to have the Estate; I am, Gentlemen, your most Humble Servant, W. T.

Ans. The Elder Brother appears to us to have the right; first against the pretensions of the youngest, because he bought what was in the power of the 2d to dispose of, since 'twas his own, and gave him a valuable consideration for it. He seems to have the right against the second, because he freely parted with his own right for the first half year, during which time the Elder fulfill'd the conditions on which his Father left it to him,

which was to marry a wife worth 800 l. which it seems he did, and to lap over. 'Tis true he did not get it all, but she was ne're the less worth the 800 l. and if she were but actually worth so much, as the case is stated, he had fulfill'd the Letter of the will, tho he had ne're recover'd a Groat on't.

And for the second Brothers pretence, that she was not worth so much because he gave him two hundred for his half year, there seems not the least shadow of justice, or reason in't, for supposing he had given him a thousand pound instead of 200, the Lady had not been worth a farthing less, tho he himself had been so much the poorer. But yet further, if he gave it on this very consideration, that he might get such a wife, and save the estate, if he did not get her, how can the second justly keep his money? If he did, how can he demand the Estate? Nay, had he mist her, and never marry'd, if the 2d has stay'd unmarried half a year, he at least has no pretence to't, because he has spent the time allotted him. Nor can we see how the commencing of the suit before the Expiration of that Term, could any way alter the matter, since the express words of the will are, that none should have the Estate but he who was marry'd to a wife of such a fortune, for which reason neither the 2d nor 3d Brother seem'd to have any right to it, for which reason it must still remain in the Elder.

Quest. 2. I'm acquainted with a Gentleman, and a Lady, persons of very good note and credit belonging to the Court, of whom I had this following Relation. In the Reign of the late King James, presently upon the Death of King Charles the 2d, as they were walking in the long Gallery in the Evening about Candle-Light, at the further end of the Gallery there seem'd as it were an Arch'd-Door, and in the middle a tall black Man standing bolt upright, and through the Door there appear'd a Light, as of many Flamboys burning; whereupon they stood still, thinking it to be King James, or some great Courtier in mourning. But not seeing him stir they began to be amaz'd, and had not the power to speak one to another: However, the Gentlewoman, took such a full view of him as to see, that he had plain white muslin Ruffles, and Cravat quill'd very neat; they both saw his face, and were satisfy'd 'twas that of King Charles the 2d, if ever they had seen him in their Lives, having taken such a particular view as they thought they could not be mistaken. Whereupon the Gentleman, calling to the Centinel to bring a light, he took the Candle in his hand and looked for the Door, where he could see nothing but the bare wainscot, whereupon he askt the Centinel whether there was no Door thereabouts, who reply'd there was none within a stones cast, and seeing him disturb'd, askt if he had seen any thing, which he would not acknowledge. The Gentleman then charg'd the Gentlewoman, not to discover it, least they might come into trouble, but they are now both ready to make affidavit of it, or give a fuller account if required. Pray your opinion of it.

Ans. 'Tis certain that the Credibility of particular stories of this Nature depends much upon the Faith of the Relator, tho the truth of them in general, we see not how any modest man can well question: In the present case, the persons who attest it ought to consider whether they were not, about the time they think they saw it, under any apprehensions of some such apparition, by reason of the darkness of the place, and the late Death of the King, and whether it were not their own imaginariou

that form'd the vision, which if they had been talking of it before, or if they fancy'd it just appear'd, and then vanish'd again, would be thought very probable. But if they had no such apprehensions, if they both saw the same appearance, without frightening one another into the belief on't, if it continu'd for some time, so that they could take a steady and distinct view of it, and their descriptions so agreed one with the other, as to the Dress, the Door, the Flambeaus, &c. all which is true, if the Relation be so, then we see no manner of reason to deny that 'twas a real apparition, tho the reason of his disturbance and appearance God only knows, who knows how Princes come by their Ends.

Quest. 3. *Sir, I heard of a very strange and wonderful accident, of a man that kept Pigeons in his yard, and he wanted one of his Pigeons for two or three days, and at last it came home, and it had something in the Bill of it; and they hunted it about to make it drop it, and it flew away, and sat on Westminster-Abby, and came again, and at last dropt it, and they took it up, and the Pigeon flew at it again to take it up, and what was it but a Silver Cross; with our Saviour on one side, and our B. Lady on the other side with a red piece of ribbon tied to it. Your speedy answer is desired.*

Quest. 4. *Sir, I heard of an eminent Tradesman in the City of London, that kept a divine in his house, &c.*

Ans. The best is, that the 2d of these questions came from the same who sent the first, and we suppose had such a Transubstantiating faith as to believe it. For those two questions he needs no great answer to 'em; but in acknowledgment of his kindness, we shall dispatch two, or three more, with which he may be more concern'd.

Quest. 5. *How will you prove the Church of Rome not to be infallible?*

Ans. By its pretending to be so.

Quest. 6. *Whether the prayer of Dives, to Lazarus, in the behalf of his Brethren, 16 of St. Luk. 27. 28. proceeded purely out of Love and Charity to them, to anticipate their coming into the same place of Torment, or whether out of Fear, lest their coming thither might augment his own misery? And lastly, pray your opinion whether this place of Scripture can warrant the Invocation of Saints, as is affirm'd by the Church of Rome?*

Ans. According to the Oeconomy of the Parable, which, as all others, must have a moral Truth at bottom; The rich Man here cou'd not have any real Love for his Relations, or concern, or compassion for them, which we think is not compatible with despair and the height of misery, which contracts the mind, and leaves room for nothing but reflexion on its self and its miserable condition. Tho yet even there self-Love remains, which must be in every sensible being, unless it cou'd be annihilated, or lose its individuation, whence it follows the rich Man here must be concern'd for his Brethren, lest their Torment shou'd increase his own. The plain moral whereof is: That we shall be punished in another world, for those whom we have ruin'd by our ill Example in this. As for the Invocation of Saints, 'tis impossible to be drawn from this Text of Scripture, (as indeed from any other) unless by those who can prove, *quolibet ex quolibet*. Here's a person in a parable, introduc'd in the state of Torment, praying to God to send a Saint to relieve him. Ergo 'tis lawful for persons on Earth, to pray to Saints in Heaven, to pray to God: Nay, to desire 'em to give 'em themselves, whatsoever they fancy they want. Tho it's plain enough they seldom stay at an *Ora pro nobis*, but [dedicate their Estates, Bodies, and Souls to such, or such a Saint, "ask and expect all things "necessary for Body and Soul, for Time, or Eterni-

ty from them] particularly from their, *Magna-Mater*, the Blessed Virgin, as any one may see, among innumerable other blasphemous flourishes, to the same purpose in a Book call'd the Life and Glories of the Blessed Virgin, Printed in the Reign of King James, and dedicated to Queen Dowager. But they go yet one story higher, for the Grand-mother it seems must command the Son as well as the mother, and St. Ann can if she please, give what she please, especially if her daughters merits club with her. Take but a small sample of their Devotion to her, from some of her admirers.

*Anna decus mundi, mater genetricis Jesu
Pro nate meritis det tuus astra Nepos!
Primitias nostrae pariens Sancta Anna Salutis
Nos cum prole tua, cumq; Nepote juva!*

And in her Rosary yet higher.

*Anna! abs te nequeant mortalia pectora frustra
Pascere, quodq; voles nata, Deus volet:
Anna igitur meritis, & tanta prole, beata,
Anna parens nostras respice magna preces.*

Advertisements.

☞ Upon the 20th Day of this instant June, will be publisht *A Funeral Oration* to the most sacred Memory of the most Serene and Potent *MART II.* Queen of Great Britain, France and Ireland. By *Francis Spanheimius*, Chief Professor of the Academy of Leyden, Pronounc'd by Publick Authority, in the Hall of the Most Illustrious States, upon the Day of the Royal Obsequies, March 4. 1697. Containing many Remarkable Passages in the LIFE and DEATH of Her late Majesty, not hitherto made publick.

☞ PROPOSALS for Printing by Subscription—An History of all the Remarkable Providences which have happened in this present Age, as also of what is curious in the works of Nature and Art, with parallel Instances from former Ages—By *WILLIAM TURNER*, M. A. and Vicar of Walberton in Suffex. PROPOSALS and SPECIMENS giving a full account of this Work, may be had of the Undertaker, *John Dunton*, at the Raven in Jewen Street, as also of *Edm. Richardson*, near the Poultry Church, and of most Book-sellers in London, and the Country.

☞ There is lately Published,--- A Sermon upon the Death of the Queen of England, Preached in the Walloon-Church at the Hague, Feb. 6. 1695. Upon these Words, *Acts*, 9. v. 36, 37. *There was at Joppa a certain Disciple whose name was Tabitha, which signifies Dorcas, who was full of Good Works and the Alms deeds which she did. It happen'd in those days that she fell sick and dy'd.* By *Ihuac Claude*, Minister of the Walloon-Church. Done into English from the Second Edition Printed in French.

☞ All three printed for *John Dunton*, at the Raven in Jewen-Street. And may also be had of *Edm. Richardson* near the Poultry-Church.

NEW Observations on the Venereal Disease, shewing the several ways of Receiving the infection, the signs when received, and dangerous effects of it, the mischiefs done by ignorant pretenders, With the true and safe way of curing the said Disease, and all Accidents that attend it; by *Charles Peter*, Chirurgion. The Second Edition Corrected and Enlarged. Price bound 1 s. Sold by the Author at his house in St. Martins-Lane, 4 doors from Newports-Street, and by no other person in or about London; for there being a spurious Edition clandestinely printed of the Authors former Observations, to prevent the like abuse this Notice is given.